

[John T. Milwee]

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Ervin, Wm.V.,PW., [Wichita?] Falls, Texas

Words 520 [38?]

Page 1 INTERVIEW WITH JOHN T. [MILWEE?]

[Milwee?], former pioneer resident of Archer County, Texas, but now living in [Marley?], Okla.

"I came to Archer county from Tarrant county in 1878, and went to work on the Bar X ranch owned by Strayhorn & Harold. Strayhorn was a Chicago commission man, and the Harolds were Illinois farmers. They had ranches in Archer, [Baylor?], Young and [Throckmorton?] counties. I worked for them until in 1881, when I went to San Angelo.

"I was in Wichita Falls only one time during the three years I was in this part of the country. That was in August, 1881, and it happened to [be?] on the same day that the surveyors running the line for the Fort Worth & Denver Railroad were in Wichita Falls. There were eight [?] of the surveyors and they were looking for [something?] to eat.

"As well as I remember, [there?] were only six or seven houses in Wichita Falls then. There was a small hotel of about five [rooms?], and a store in a building about 16x30 feet. I don't [remember?] who ran the hotel and the store. I saw Tom (W.T.) Waggoner here that day, which was the [only?] time I ever saw [him?]. I was not [again?] in Wichita Falls until forty years later. I never lived here. C - 12. Tex.

"My brother who was in this country before I was, [hauled?] supplies in 1872 from [Weatherford?], Texas, to a company of Texas Rangers under [?] command of Captain [Ikard?] who were camped on the Big Wichita River near where the dam at Diversion Lake

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now is. The rangers were the [?] drive Indians out when they would come on raids. The Indians would come in warm weather on moonlight nights to steal horses. They would get a bunch of horses and drive them out at night, and lay hidden during the day. My brother is now dead. 2 "There was a bad drought in this part of the country in 1881, and just about all the people in here who were farming moved out, and so there were not many people here for awhile. There were mostly big ranches in there then anyway. Waggoner's ranch headquarters at that time was near the Wichita River, two or three miles from Wichita Falls, I knew [?] Roberts. He was a gunman hired by Waggoner to run off cattle thieves. He was a little, dried up Irishman, but he was a killer. He would just kill a man as look at him if the man crossed him in any way. He had killed three or four men. He always carried a sawed-off double-barrel shotgun on his saddle.

"There was not, however, very much cattle stealing around here as it was a thinly settled country with mostly big ranches, which hired plenty of men to look after their stock. Then, the people in here were mostly a pretty good class of [people?]. [Sometimes?] the cowboys would come to town and drink too much, and go around shooting their guns off, but nobody paid much attention to them.

"The Indians had been driven out of here and placed on the reservation [before?] I came to this country, and [so?] things were pretty quiet."